



JOSEPH R. BIDEN, III
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
820 NORTH FRENCH STREET
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE 19801

CONTACT JASON MILLER
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
PHONE (302) 577-8949
CELL (302) 893-8939
Jason.Miller@state.de.us

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Sussex County Grand Jury returns indictments for murder of Georgetown police officer Chad Spicer

Wilmington, DE – “Today, the Sussex County Grand Jury returned a 14 count indictment charging Derrick Powell with 1st Degree Murder, among other charges, for the September 1 shooting that killed Georgetown police officer Patrolman Chad Spicer and injured Georgetown police officer Corporal Shawn Brittingham,” Attorney General Beau Biden stated.

“After reviewing the facts of the crime, we have probable cause to believe that one or more statutory aggravating circumstances are present, thus making the death penalty a possibility in this case. Consequently, we will advise the Superior Court that for procedural purposes this case should be treated as a death penalty case. The final decision about whether to seek the death penalty will be made after the Department completes its review pursuant to our established death penalty review procedures.”

On September 1, 2009, Georgetown Police officers Chad Spicer and Shawn Brittingham responded to a report of a shooting at the McDonald’s restaurant on Route 113 in Georgetown. They identified and attempted to stop a vehicle suspected to be involved in the incident. During that pursuit the suspect vehicle suddenly stopped and the driver, Christopher Reeves, fled the vehicle. Derrick Powell, a passenger, fired a handgun at the police cruiser. The bullet struck Patrolman Spicer and a piece of the projectile struck Corporal Brittingham. Patrolman Spicer died as the result of his gunshot wound.

Powell was apprehended after a nearby resident reported to police that an individual had unlawfully entered her home. When Powell was taken into police custody, he was in possession of a 9 millimeter semi-automatic pistol. Reeves turned himself in to the police several days later.

Today the Sussex County Grand Jury indicted Derrick Powell on the following felonies:

- First Degree Murder for recklessly causing the death of Patrolman Chad Spicer, a law enforcement officer, in the lawful performance of his duties
- First Degree Murder, Felony Murder, for recklessly causing the death of Patrolman Spicer while fleeing from an attempted robbery
- Second Degree Burglary for entering a residence armed with a handgun
- Second Degree Assault for recklessly causing physical injury to Corporal Shawn Brittingham by means of a deadly weapon
- Resisting Arrest with force or violence
- Attempted Robbery First Degree for his conduct at McDonald’s
- Reckless Endangering First Degree for his conduct at McDonald’s
- 7 Counts of Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony

Today the Sussex County Grand Jury indicted Christopher Reeves on the following charges:

- Failure to Stop at the Command of a Police Officer, a felony
- Resisting Arrest, a misdemeanor

The Delaware Department of Justice reminds the public that an indictment is merely an allegation and is not evidence of guilt. Defendants are presumed innocent and are entitled to a jury trial at which the State bears the burden of proving each charge beyond a reasonable doubt.

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